

INCREASING VISIBILITY AND CUSTOMER VOLUME IN CASE COMPANY X



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Heidi Honkajuuri

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Tekijä Heidi Honkajuuri

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TIIVISTELMÄ

Tämän tutkimuksen toimeksiantajana toimi yritys X. Kilpailukyvyyn säilyttämiseksi kyseinen yritys halusi pysyä nimettömänä. Kuitenkin joitain yksityiskohtia yrityksestä oli tutkija kykenevä käyttämään ja julkaisemaan tässä tutkimuksessa. Opinnäytetyön tärkein syy oli selvittää, miten kyseinen yritys voisi kasvattaa bränditietoisuuttaan, houkutellessa uusia asiakkaita sekä saada palvelujaan tunnetuksi.

Tutkimuksen tavoitteena oli kerätä teoreettista tietoa sisältömarkkinoinnista, sosiaalisessa mediassa markkinoinnista ja muista asiaankuuluvista teorioista sekä kuvata case-yritys X:n nykytilannetta. Jotta voitaisiin tehdä suosituksia tehokkaammista ja kelvollisista tavoista parantaa näkyvyyttä ja kasvattaa asiakaskuntaa, tarvittiin asianmukainen analyysi toteutettavaksi. Suositusten jälkeen tehtiin lopullinen johtopäätös. Tutkimuksessa käytettiin alaan liittyvää kirjallisuutta ja WWW-lähteitä vastaavan toissijaisen tiedon etsimiseksi. Lisäksi haastateltiin toimitusjohtajaa päätietojen keräämiseksi ja lopuksi nykytilanteen analysoimiseksi käytettiin SWOT-menetelmää sekä tarkasteltiin tällä hetkellä käytössä olevia markkinointikanavia ja arvioitiin yrityksen kilpailukykyisyyttä.

Analyysissa todettiin, että case-yrityksen markkinointistrategiat tarvitsivat uudelleenarviointia. Koska yritys halusi tarjota entistä kustannus-
tehokkaampia ja nopeampia keinoja palvelujensa edistämiseksi, suositeltiin heidän investoivan enemmän aikaa läsnäoloon sosiaalisessa mediassa. Yksi avainasioista todettiin olevan vankan sisältösuunnitelman tarve yrityksen valitsemille markkinointikanaville, jotta heidän sanomansa tulisi kuulluksi. On toivottavaa, että case-yritys X tulee hyödyntämään tarpeellisia ohjeita ja neuvoja tulevien markkinointitoimien parantamiseksi.

Avainsanat Sisältömarkkinointi, markkinointi sosiaalisessa mediassa, sosiaalinen media, brändin tunnetuus

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ABSTRACT

This research was commissioned by case company X. For not losing the competitive edge the company wanted to stay anonymous. However, some details about the company were researcher able to use and publish within this research. Main reason for this thesis was to find out how could this company grow their brand awareness and attract more customers towards their services.

The objectives of the research included: gathering theoretical information about Content Marketing, Social Media Marketing and other related theories as well as describing the current situation of the case company X. In order to make recommendations of the most effective and reasonable ways to improve visibility and grow the customer base, proper analysis needed to be executed. After recommendations were completed the final conclusion was made. What comes to the research methods; literature and different web sources were utilized to find related secondary data, interview with CEO was conducted to get primary data and finally current situation analyzed by using SWOT and examining currently used marketing channels as well as competitive advantage.

The analysis pointed out that the case company X's marketing strategies were in need of genuine re-evaluation. Since the company wished to have more cost-efficient and faster ways to promote their services it was recommended for them to put especially more focus on their social media presence. Also one of the key points was that whichever marketing channel/s they will choose to utilize they should first have a solid content plan to get their messages heard. It is hoped that the case company X will utilize the needful instructions and tips introduced in this research for their future marketing development.

Keywords Content marketing, social media marketing, social media, brand awareness

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This research aims at helping the case company to find ways to increase their visibility and customer volume. The objective of the study is to provide the best practices for improving the marketing management cost-effectively and the overall recognition of the company. The marketing approaches chosen for closer research are content marketing and social media marketing. This research was commissioned by the owner of the case company.

The amount of events held in this company's facilities has been decreasing already for a few years and this has led to deterioration of sales. Those declining numbers of customers is a problem in whole Kanta-Häme area due to the economical situation of households, oversupply and higher competition. The competition gets higher and higher since there are only some customers looking for similar services in the area.

The company started their business activities in 2009 but they still haven't reached a solid knowledge in the minds of customers. Even local people do not recognize the name of the company or they do but they do not know what kind of business activities are practiced in this particular place. In order to increase the customer volume it's crucial to spread out the awareness of the business activities.

1.2 Assigning Company

Case Company X is a privately owned company that has established its business operations in 2009. The company is a mansion that is offering facilities for rent and event services that come along with the reservation. Customers are private persons, companies, organizations and associations. The most common events during the year are weddings, companies' conferences or annual meetings of associations. This place is only open for reservation and do not have permanent staff other than the owner and his wife.

The 200 hundred years old mansion is located in Hämeenlinna next to the lake, Vanajavesi. The mansion has a long history and the owner's family has been part of the history since 1939. The facilities provided by the case company X include a big and historical hall for event use and in addition a fully equipped bar area. In a separate part of the building there is a mini spa which includes the necessary function in order to arrange sauna evenings for companies or for example bachelor parties of private persons. The mansion also has a large park-like yard with good scenery to the lake. The yard is utilized within companies wellbeing days when there are some outdoor activities performed.

The mansion does not have any accommodation except a honeymoon suite which is rented for wedding couples so that after the wedding they can spend a night there and therefore do not need to travel anywhere else.

The case company also owns real estates from Spain and rents them out as a part of the business. They have three holiday homes that have renters almost all year around, so quite big part of the incomes are generated through them.

1.3 Purpose and Research Question

Research question for this thesis research was the following:

“How can visibility and customer volume be increased in case company X?”

The purpose of the study is to find out what has led the case company to the conclusion that they need to grow their brand awareness. Does the question of customer paucity have something to do with the fact that the company does not feel they are well-known in their business field or because their marketing actions are not effective enough. What are the ways and marketing channels that would help the company to attract more customers and also retain them.

1.4 Research Objectives and Methods

The objectives of the research are the following:

1. To gather theoretical information about Content Marketing, Social Media Marketing and other related theories
2. To describe the current situation of the case company X
3. To analyse the results of the research and conclude the findings
4. To make recommendations of the most cost-effective and reasonable ways to improve the visibility and grow the amount of the customers based on the findings of the research.

Research methods used within this research are:

1. Utilize literature and different web sources to find the related secondary data.

This research utilizes secondary data because it is economical and time saving. With the help of secondary data collecting and analysing the primary data proves to be easier. Additionally the information provided by secondary data presents a good basis for comparison of the data and it improves the comprehension of the problems occurred. As a secondary data sources research utilizes different web sources such as articles, blogs and journals as well as printed books.

2. Perform a personal interview for the CEO of the company in order to receive primary data.

Primary data will be collected in the form of personal interview performed by the researcher for CEO of the case company X. Primary data addresses the specific and up to date issues related to the case company's concerns and problems. According to problems detected can be the design of research formed. For this research the primary data is the most crucial since the case company is a small business based on entrepreneurship and its customer base is varied.

3. Analyse current situation of the case company X by using SWOT analysis and TOWS strategies. Additionally examine competitive advantage and current marketing channels.

To able to dig in deeper the case company's philosophy and actions analysis of the current stage is a must. SWOT analysis is used for helping to identify company's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. It will be the framework for understanding how is the company doing now and how the future is looking like. To take it to the next level TOWS or SWOT Matrix is used to form directive strategies based on the SWOT results. The results of TOWS will give a guideline for constructing recommendations for the future developments.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Content Marketing

"Content marketing is a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly-defined audience — and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer action." (Content Marketing Institute web page, 2016).

First of all, content marketing as a term might be new and exciting but the marketing type itself has been here for a long time. It is expressed that content marketing began to attract new widespread interest across United States of America somewhere around 2009. Different brands started to realize that the old one-way marketing way did not appeal as it had before. The reason for all changes in marketing is internet and oversupply of content and messages. It was a fact that you had to have the most useful, interesting and entertaining content in order to stand up from the crowd. (Lintulahti, 2014.)

A core of content marketing is delivering the information needed for customers for them to be more aware and intelligent rather than pitching your products or services. Goals of the content marketing are to grow brand awareness and to educate, attract and retain customers. Content marketing is a long term strategy that is based on building a sturdy relationship with your target customers. Within concept marketing there are many types of content that could be marketed. Examples of these types can be in-

fographics, webpages, videos, podcasts, blogs, images, case studies or e-books.

Without a great content, marketing can be considered impossible. There are different strategies and ways to market but in each of the tactics you should involve content marketing. For example before heading into social media with your company you should have an existing content strategy if you want to publish something compelling that makes people to talk about it. This same applies for example to a speech. When speaking in front of a big crowd you most likely have a speech with relevant content made in beforehand instead of just rushing into the podium to say whatever comes to your mind.

2.1.1 Types of Content

There are several types of content both in print and online that can be included into the content marketing strategy. Printed publications are such as magazines, newsletters and white papers. Online publications include websites, e-books, podcasts, blogs, videos, digital magazines and infographics. Here are introduced few of them which are considered to be helpful within this research:

Web page

Web pages are documents that can be accessed through internet and they are always written in Hypertext Markup Language (HTML). Web pages can be displayed on a monitor or with a mobile device. They usually contain text, images, graphics, side bar menus and hyperlinks. The first web page ever, was created in 1991 by Tim Berners-Lee. (Computer Hope, 2017.)

First of all, every company should have a web page since it is a base for everything in the internet. There might not be right or wrong way to build the web page but certainly with knowledge it can be made interesting. Focus should be on making the page as user-friendly as possible. The page should also load fast and have enough information. It is good to keep in mind that the page contains lots of material and information, so great navigation is important; meaning side bar menus and links between the pages. If there is a need to use many colours or images, it is good to realize what is appropriate and what is too much. And last, the contact information and correctly spelled texts are the things that complete the page. (Kyrnin, 2017.)

Blog

An informational website maintained by individual, group or organization where all the content is newly updated and can be founded easily is called a blog. The blog is normally public but it can also be limited for certain target group. Content of the blog can be published in form of text, video,

pictures or sound. Compared to the other websites blog has more of personal perspective and higher interactivity.

At first it might seem like an easy task to start a blog but soon many problems can come to you. One of the problems is the name of the blog it might not be as selling as thought. Or maybe the blog is not fulfilling all the features of a blog and its appearance fails. Maybe for the author of the blog it is hard to find suitable theme so that there could be found enough material for writing. Difficulty in initiating the blog, fear of negative feedback or wrong kind of audience can also be listed as possible challenges along the way. Self-censorship or criticality on the posts can be one cause of problems that can lead to the conclusion that there are not enough ideas, which definitely is not true. (Kurvinen & Kortesus 2011, 13-14.)

Writing a blog mostly is a lifestyle. Authors of blogs do not write them because they have to but because they want to and since it takes lots of time it automatically comes a big part of everyday life. Every blogger has their own style, some are more exposed and bring unashamedly more personal stories into their blogs and then some bloggers are more reserved and share their stories with filter. The theme of the blog brings the substance and perspective brings out the personality. Theme is something that the author can freely choose but remember when professionally blogging keep the theme narrower than when doing a personal blog. One of the key points when writing a blog is setting clear goals for what is wanted to be achieved with the blog and for whom the blog is targeted. (Kortesus & Kurvinen 2011, 15-18.)

Corporate blog is a professional blog used for business purposes and its objective is to generate money indirectly. The corporate blog is fast and frequently free channel to utilize for the business. With a good corporate blog it is possible to increase sales and brand awareness. Market by utilizing the content and avoid pledging information, share useful tips and articles or personal experiences. Good content of corporate blog is unique, containing the novelty value, personalized, developing, entertaining but also comprising factual knowledge. To be able to bring out the content with propriety and in the right way blog's appearance is an important factor. (Kortesus&Kurvinen 2011, 70-72.)

E-newsletter

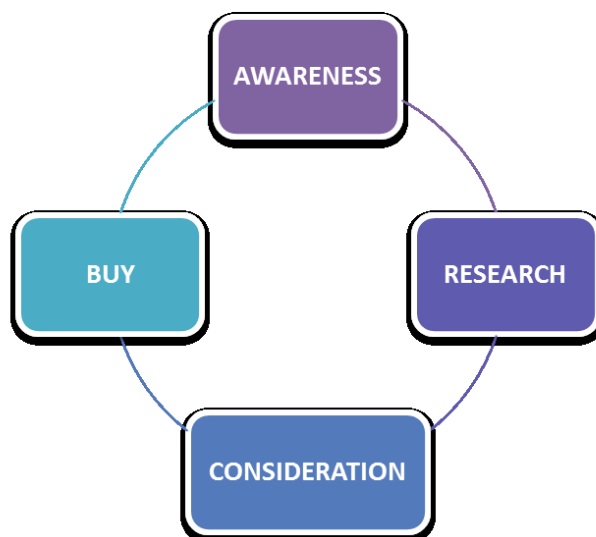
A publication that is regularly developed and distributed by enterprise is called a newsletter. Newsletters are used to maintain contact with customers and to promote products and services of the enterprise. Newsletters that are delivered electronically (via e-mail or through web site) are e-newsletters. In the new social media world, e-mail addresses that a business holds are considered as significant asset because those contacts belong to your company. And the connection (customer names, accounts) that the business has with the customers in Facebook or Twitter don't belong to them, they belong to Facebook and Twitter. (Benchmark, 2017.)

To get more customers to subscribe a newsletter, first thing that has to be spot on is a landing page. On a landing page there should be clear and simple list of reasons why someone should sign up for your newsletter. Showing with a picture what is to come or making a link to a sample has a point in customers to stay in the landing page. Having a short and easy sign up that can be preferably found above the fold is a key for getting more subscribers. All in all, getting rid of all needless distractions on the landing page will make it easier to understand what is going on with your newsletter. (Pulizzi, 2012.)

For getting together a great newsletter it needs to have certain prospects that will catch the eye of a reader. Firstly, there is to keep in mind that subject lines do matter and having a repeated subject line every time makes it easier for reader to follow a structure of the newsletter. Secondly, adding a personal touch both in a visual look and in a text will make customers more interested and craving for more. Lastly, give readers content that they are looking for seeing and are glad to read.

2.1.2 Steps of Buying Circle

For fully understanding the meaning and importance of content marketing there first should be an understanding of a customer's buying process. The process is usually introduced by using a circle because it tends to be repeating scenario time after time. Sometimes the process is presented also in linear form. In short, the buying circle is a process that every customer goes through when they buy a product or service. And customer can be only in one of the stages of the circle at a time. (Kissmetrics, 2016.)



Awareness

There is a certain need existing but the solution for satisfying the need is not yet recognized by the customer.

Research

Once the customer learns that there is a solution starts the research of information for further education. For example a washing machine buyer will try to find out what kind of different types of washing machines exists and which one of them would best suit their needs.

Consideration

In this point start the evaluation of the opportunities since it's important to find a quality product at fair price.

Buy

Finally, customer is ready to make the decision and move forward with the transaction.

(Steimle 2014.)

What comes to traditional marketing and advertising in the buying circle, last two steps are covered greatly. But content marketing digs already into the first two steps by increasing the awareness of solutions and educating customers about the services and products that they may have never even considered before. The trick is that potential customers have found the content of the company and found value in it so that when customer reaches out for you in that point they are already convinced that they want your service or product. (Steimle 2014.)

2.1.3 Challenges of Content Marketing

One of the most challenging things in digital messages is that the trace of the message will fade away fast. And since creating committing content is perceived difficult the replacing action is to send messages more frequently with more compelling contents. This reinforces positive memory trace.

Movements of small enterprises are fast and change is continuous, which means that everyone is doing everything and focus in marketing is often left minor. Marketing effort is not considered so significant since the efforts are normally not generating direct cash flow. For small enterprise also internet is very wide concept to be handled alone. But who else would know your business like you do. However, this can be solved with fine planning and organising as well as effective use of resources. The normal reason for unsuccessful content generation is that there is no proper planning or reasoning behind marketing actions when resources like time and text producing ability seems to be limited. Due to the insufficient use of resources companies are not able to keep up the stability and good quality in their updates. (Keronen&Tanni 2013, 26-30.)

When thinking about marketing channels in internet and the related words that appear first in to your mind are like Facebook, Twitter, Google, blogs, mobile marketing and search engine optimization. It is clear that there are not many people who would list word "content" or "content marketing". This means that we are so used to living in a world where these marketing channels and our minds are filled with information about them that we just cannot see clearly anymore. When we think marketing online we think

that we need to set up bunch of accounts for the different social media channels and what we do not think is the content inside the messages we provide within these channels. For many companies it is enough if you are just in the right place, like in Facebook for example, but you may not have any clue what you should write in to your posts. So what is currently happening in some of the companies is that they have taken into further consideration the fact that what really could be achieved through the internet channels if all the actions would be well planned and executed. What if, after all, we do not try to be in all the channels at the same time but we actually try to find the best options for our business. (Keronen&Tanni 2013, 26-30.)

One common misunderstanding within content marketing is the unreal expectations or impatience on finding out the results. First of all, it takes some time for customers to find you and start following more frequently your actions. You have to build credibility and share your story with the audience so that they become familiar with your operations. Make realistic targets, for example very few blogs achieve winning success overnight, so why should your business be capable of it.

Do not let the high competition for audience's attention to make you surrender. Most likely someone in somewhere has made a blog or other post about the same subject as you, but it does not mean that you could not posted in again in another context or even in similar kind. The challenge is not based on this fact the challenge occurs when delivering the content.

2.1.4 Goals of Content Marketing

One of the main goals in content marketing is increasing brand awareness. Brand awareness itself means that customers recognize your existence and availability. With content marketing companies can bring more valuable information within customers' reach. When there is more valuable, relevant and interesting information available about your company it will attract more customers to pay attention and that can lead to customer volume growth. More detailed information you give more educated your potential customers will be and they might end up buying your product or service. (Immonen, 2013.)

So, how about customer engagement? Well, in content marketing customer engagement is one of the aspects. For example with newsletters via email or other continual updates in Facebook or Twitter you will stay in potential customers' minds. The key here is that you have made your business more familiar for them and you should keep reminding what you are able to offer. Making leads is part of content marketing strategy. Leads are perceived as sources of incomes, potential customers and lifeblood for the enterprise. Purpose of leads is to make people want more and choose your company. Overall, content marketing enhances better customer service by offering tips and guidelines for the use of products or services which will result better experiences of customers. (Immonen, 2013.)

In content marketing everything starts with the customer. To offer better customer service and increase satisfaction you have to think about your audience. The audience is looking for something useful and interesting but also entertaining. If the content experience is dull the interest easily drops and that one customer may never come back to your product or services again. And it should be remembered that each customer counts. The content should be able to solve customer's problem, provide education to the matter and be engaging. Most of the times it is all about exceeding expectations.

2.1.5 Content Marketing Strategy

When talking about digital world not only companies are potential publishers but so are consumers. Everyone has ability and tools to share different kinds of contents online. Customers see online contents growing amounts per day and they expect to be entertained and educated. For customers it's most important to discover needed information easily and they also like to have an ability to interact within the brand. Internet being filled of information you need to know how to present your content without passing unnoticed in between of it all. You have to be visible in the right place at the right time. (Odden 2012, 53.)

Sadly for many companies content is just an afterthought after they have used whole lot of time building up the perfect platform. Let's take a marketing flyer for example; firstly there are technologists that build the platform, then there are designers making the wireframes and lastly flash designers creating all the elements that come together as a reasonable page layout. When the framework has concluded and the flyer has been run through many steps it is finally time to create the content. But when it comes to creating the content many businesses think that their visual look will overcome the content and customers are actually the ones who will generate the content in their own minds. Not everyone seems to understand that it does matter what kind of content you publish out there. (Rosenbaum 2011, 192.)

For generating better and actually meaningful content there must be a content strategy to define why certain content should be published and in which way / where it would be most convenient to publish.

Below here are six steps for a better content marketing strategy:

1. Objectives

Like any other strategy, the first step includes establishing your goals. What you want to accomplish within your content marketing strategy.

2. Audience

Customer segmentation is a next step in building of content marketing strategy. How your potential customers are motivated to buy, what kind of characteristics they possesses et cetera.

3. Content plan

When you are aware of your business goals and you understand what customers are looking for you can create a content plan. Content plan represents the idea of what kind of content will be published, which kind of topics are used in order to result desired outcomes.

4. Promotion

Publish and promote your content in order to expose your valuable message. Remember to link your marketing channels to each other for better benefits.

5. Engagement

In this stage you should have a growing social network and you should be able to identify the most compelling stories for developing future contents.

6. Measurement

Have you reached your content marketing goals and are your interactions bearing any fruits? If answer is yes, your content marketing strategy seems to be functioning well.

(Odden 2012, 55-56.)

It should be remembered when making the strategy that its purpose is not to make more content, actually in contrary, to make less of it. Also there has to be clear principles about who is making the content and is responsible for it. In that way maybe there will be more thought behind the content when someone actually is responsible for the words written.

After all, make sure that content fits specifically to your site and your brand. (Rosenbaum 2011, 194.)

2.1.6 Marketing Content Online

LLTA – model (introduced in Johdata asiakkaasi verkkoon book) is a tool developed for creating good customer experiences. With this tool it is easier to perceive the cause –and- effect- relationships between different contents and to create more consistent story for your online forum. So what is it meant with cause-and-effect-relationships is that for example in some web page there is an advertisement that promises a fair discount on coffee machines and by clicking the add it directs you to company's homepage. Since so far there is nothing wrong if there is a clear continuum for the story - meaning that in the first page there is clearly visible the advertised coffee machines. However, in most of the times this is not the case. Many times you end up in the company's homepage without being able to see any information about the coffee machines and then the customer's interest drops quickly which most likely leads to closing the page without putting too much effort on finding the information desired. (Keronen&Tanni 2013, 105-108.)

LLTA-model is referred to be a content marketing in miniature size. LLTA comes from Finnish words “lupaus” (as promise), “lunastus” (as redemption), “todistus” (as proof) and “aktivointi” (as activation). “Lupaus” (promise) should open up the content more by telling the customer in which problem the solution is offered and how customer could benefit. Then comes “lunastus” (redemption) and it means that now is the time to cash out the promises made before. In this stage company needs to point out how they are going to carry out the promises and what it takes from the customer to make the change and buy the product or service. “Todistus” (proof) is an example of what are the benefits gained by the change. Proofs can be statistics, pictures, videos, real life experiences, things you normally see in companies’ promotional brochures. “Aktivointi” (activation) is the last step in the process and it should guide the customer to explore more about the subject and about the company. Good ways for activation are newsletters, corporate blogs or e-mails with discount information. (Keronen&Tanni 2013, 105-108.)

LLTA-model is completely based on customer’s point of view. It tries to bring out the content in the best way for customer to understand and identify it.

2.2 Social Media Marketing

When speaking of promoting in internet by utilizing different social media platforms and websites, we talk about social media marketing. The word social media itself means all online channels that offer people a chance to interact, network and share content.

We can all state together that after the entry of social media marketing the marketing patterns have changed considerably. In terms of marketing people are no longer passive but to know how to find and gather information on available products and services world-wide. All in all, people have become wiser and more active consumers. This also means that the people have thus a better basis for comparison of different brands and the competition between brands has become even tougher. On the other hand, social media has brought a change for advertising and finding potential customers for example consumer brands (craftsmen etc.), different performing artists, schools, municipalities and even for the churches. (Wordstream, 2017.)

Good examples of operators that are utilizing these new marketing channels are colleges and universities. Earlier there were very different and more practical methods of getting familiar with schools you would like and you were very much dependent on your study counsellor. Today, there are many schools have Facebook and Instagram accounts that work for advertising schools. The accounts have updated pictures of the school building, video clips from lessons and student activities at the school, as well as lots of detailed information about the degree programs. There's no more “randomness” in choosing of the right place to study because selecting has become much easier. And it can be said that young people are cer-

tainly basing their choices according to their perceptions on social media, or at least that one could imagine.

2.2.1 Social Media Marketing Strategy

Since marketing in social media, and especially using different social media tools and channels, it is not yet that familiar for many companies therefore making a proper examination and strategy is more than advisable in order to gain the best benefits. Some marketers like Guy Kuwasaki propose that you do not need a social media strategy and then other say that you definitely do. Maybe the main struggle lies on the fact that if any examination of possibilities and a steady plan is not made it will be a challenge to find the right social media channels for your business. (Odden 2012, 60-61.)

Even there are varieties of social media marketing strategy examples that can be followed all of them have more or less similar suggestions for making successful and useful plan for marketing socially. Social media marketing strategy has some similarities with content marketing strategy. The following strategy has 12 essential points along the way when making to the social media:

1. Research and know your audience
 2. Use the same social media networks as your audience
 3. Identity your KIPs (key performance indicators)
 4. Write a social media marketing playbook
 5. Align the people at your company with the plan
 6. Set aside some time at the beginning of each week to prepare
 7. Develop a content marketing calendar
 8. Post content that is relevant to newsworthy topics and events
 9. Treat all of your social channels differently
 10. Assign someone to act as a customer service representative
 11. Schedule metrics reporting
 12. Re-analyse your plan on regular basis
- (Dyer, 2014.)

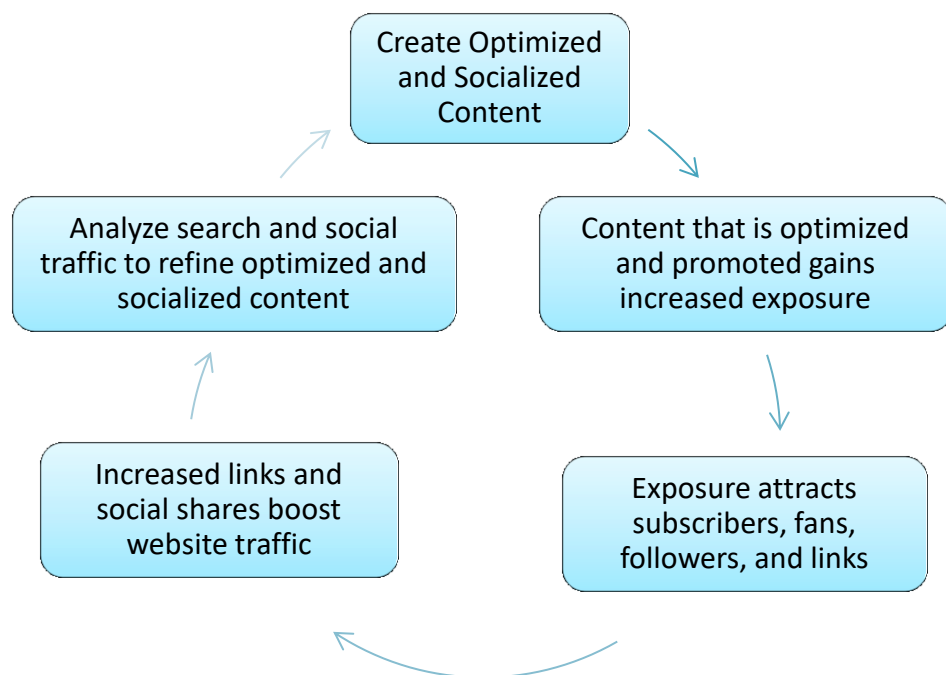
For being flourishing in social media you have to know how the target audience behaves and where they like to hang at. Using the same social media channels and also same hashtags as your audience does makes customers easier to find your business. Keeping in mind what is wanted to be accomplished tells have the efforts made any result. A playbook is a good way to mark down goals and all important details like audience profiles, campaigns, brand personas and key performance indicators (quantifiable measures). To come up with great ideas and thoughtful posts certain time should be scheduled each week to prepare and plan. One good tool to use when planning is a content marketing calendar that would include topics, headlines, related links et cetera. The calendar is a brilliant idea on keeping up what have been posted, when and why so that same content is not repeated, at least too often and not in the exact same form. When strategy is completely formed everyone should be aware of it, at least one person in charge and someone that will acts as a customer service representative.

And finally, using of common sense is allowed; if something in the plan is not working or some reason target audience is not responding in a wanted level, re-think the plan thorough. (Dyer, 2014.)

2.2.2 Cycle of Social Media

It is essential for brand to understand that it is not enough to publish once in while some interesting content and rely on retaining possible customers based on few efforts in social media. It takes more commitment and long term planning. People do want more than few updates in Facebook here and there in order to get genuinely interested and express willingness towards actual customer relationship. Creating, sharing and especially following content engagement is important for increasing of brand's visibility and customer volume. In terms of future content plans for brand it is valuable to know what customers are interested in, what did they like about in previously published contents and what kind of content they wanted to share for others.

To be able to develop a cyclical approach for improvement and growth in content sharing and social media marketing this method created by Odden Lee can be used as an assisting tool. (Odden 2012, 112-114.)



1. Creation

Content is planned, optimized and socially promoted in the places where brand's potential customers spend time.

2. *Awareness*

People discover brand's optimized and socialized content. There will be some who don't care at all and some who might be future customers. The point is that now the content is out there and it will be spoken, shared and commented.

3. *Attraction*

Now that people have paid attention towards brand's content they start to like and follow you.

4. *Growth*

With a growing reputé more and more people will find their ways into brand's website because of greater expose in social media.

5. *Analysis and insight*

In refinement of future content plans it is helpful to analyse what brand has discovered about customers behaviour and ways to treat the content in social media.

6. *Repeat*

With all the information received from customer insights you can now implement better-performing and updated content plan.
(Odden 2012, 112-114.)

2.2.3 Importance of Social Media

Whether we are talking about content marketing or social media marketing the both orientations involve use of social media. So let's talk shortly about why social media is nowadays the number one place to be for businesses. Firstly, well-maintained social media presence tells for consumers that brand is active and is not afraid to communicate with customers. It also has possibility to increase customer loyalty with direct feedback and customer reviews. However, lack of understanding how to get the outcomes wanted has got brands to doubt about benefits of social media.

The statics indicates us the great potential that lies on marketing in social media. According to HubSpot 92% of marketers in 2014 agreed that use of social media is important for their brands and 80% points out that their business traffic has increased due to social media efforts. (Sam Kusinitz, 2014.)

Overall, social media platforms are best places to learn valuable information about your customers and gather the relevant data for improving your products or services. Additionally it increases brand recognition and web site traffic. Every one of your posts is an opportunity to attract and convert new customers. Most of all, for many marketers social media offers chance to decrease their marketing costs since it takes only half of your time to develop and publish new content. And at start it is not necessary to pay for your advertising and even when starting to pay for them costs are relatively cheap and control of the costs is totally on your hands. (DeMers, 2014.)

2.2.4 Social Media Marketing vs Content Marketing

Social media marketing is commonly mixed with content marketing even though they are two distinct entities. These two ways of marketing are heavily overlapping because content marketing includes use of social media and social media marketing needs relevant content for providing messages. (Pulizzi 2014, 5-6.)



(Chris, 2017.)

Where content marketing is as old as the newspaper, social media marketing is a much newer approach in the marketing cycles. But as the picture above shows that together used content marketing and social media marketing are strong weapons when gaining successful online marketing. Generating quality content and having a proper social media presence are keys for competitive market strategy.

The centre of content marketing is a brand webpage. The point is to use social media platforms like Facebook or Twitter for linking content from the brand's webpage. When in social media marketing everything starts with choosing the platform for the brand. Then when the platform is chosen the brand is able to use their produced content for marketing themselves.

2.2.5 Social Media Channels

When speaking of social media channels it means all different websites and networks across the Internet. Most of the channels or platforms are free but also have even better advertising options when paid a little bit of money. In social media there are enormous amounts of networks but it does not mean that companies should be involved in each of them. Below are introduced the few most popular social media channels.

Facebook

Facebook is without denying the biggest social platform of the century with its almost two million daily users. It holds in it people all over the world with different demographic segmentations. Facebook is originally targeted to the private people but in times has started to prefer companies as well. (Chaffey for Smart Insides, 2017.)

Facebook offers marketing tools for businesses to achieve their goals in marketing online. These tools include; increasing visibility, creating brand awareness and leads, facilitating discovery, gaining customer loyalty and improving sales. Facebook encourages use the tools for creating striking ads. Facebook is also linked to other social applications such as Instagram, Messenger, Atlas, Audience Network and Workplace. And that makes it easier for businesses to keep in touch with their partners and customers. (Facebook for business, 2017.)

Instagram

Instagram, owned by Facebook, has grown its popularity over the past few years and is now the world's dominant image sharing site. This site offers a possibility to tell visual stories through photographs. For personal use Instagram is fun and spontaneous but for business uses it takes more effort and consideration in order to get followers. (Pulizzi 2014, 243.)

With Instagram your business is able to grow brand awareness, arouse interest and simply get more customers. According to Instagram's website 400 million people use the application each day and 80% of all the users are following some brand or business activity. So this platform offers a good place for customers to find you, follow you and get inspired. In addition, businesses are able to network with other brands. (Instagram for business, 2017.)

Twitter

Twitter is one of the leading websites in Internet and everyone knows it. The funky thing about Twitter is that only 140 characters are allowed when writing a tweet. Twitter has become familiar to many people through its celebrity tweets which are many times referred to in news and articles in social media. So Twitter is perfect for publishing tweets about personal life of people but how about business wisely? Free tools that Twitter offers for marketing are hashtags, videos, direct messages, photos, gifts, polls, chats, lists, et cetera. There are many ways to utilize this website for advertising purposes. And for small cost Twitter Ads can be exploited for better achieving of business goals.

All and all Twitter promises these benefits: discovering what happens right now, brand awareness growth, providing timely customer service and connecting with potential influencers and of course with customers. (Twitter Business, 2017.)

YouTube

YouTube is a video-sharing network owned by Google where people are able to view, upload, share, rate and comment the videos. YouTube has become the one and only channels to use in news and in different entertainment matters. This network has over billion users from which many are businesses or vloggers. The vloggers are telling their stories through

videos while bloggers that write the stories that they want to be published. YouTube offers creative and most of all visual components for marketing purposes. (Corcione, 2017.)

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a social networking service that connects business professionals in any industries and especially a good tool for B2B marketing. LinkedIn is all about building relationships with your connections and using the right professional titles for allowing people to find you. LinkedIn marketing solutions offer a variety of ways to reach business professionals from all over the world. As it is referred in Business.linkedin.com that this is network has a very different mindset and intent than in other social media channels. (Linked in for Business, 2017.)

3 CURRENT SITUATION OF THE CASE COMPANY X

3.1 Target Market

The case company X has two target markets; private persons and companies. These markets cannot be segmented by their demographic or geographic. What combines the two target markets is customer's relationship to the product or in this case to the service. When considering companies as customers the main target group is businesses with need of conference facilities. From private persons the primary target group which is more likely to buy their services is wedding couples. In addition there are other small celebrations held such as birthdays and graduations.

3.2 Marketing Channels

Web page

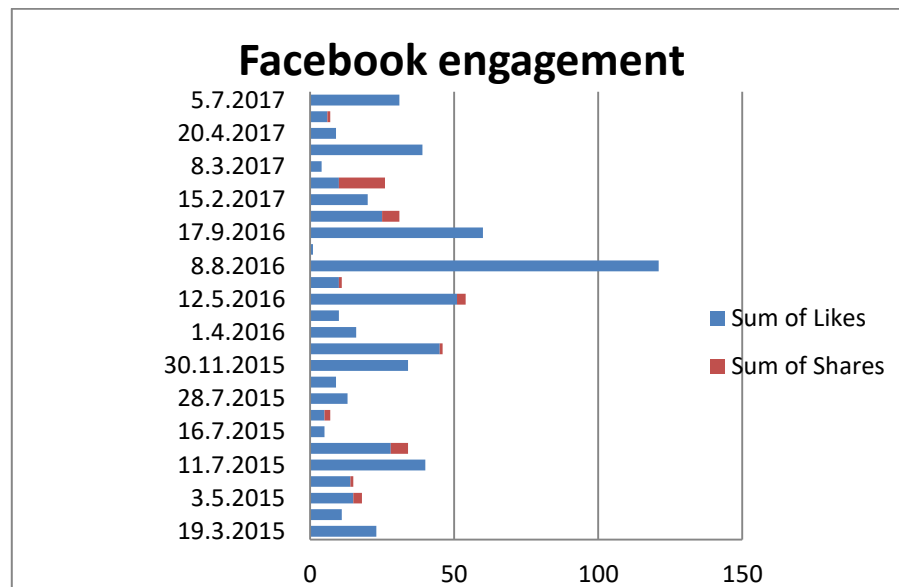
Company has its own web page that is updated roughly once a month. The new web page was made by the entrepreneur's wife in 2015. In the web page there are lots of pictures, contact information and other basic information about the services provided. The page is updated once in a month or two and topical news are added on the front page. The page also has a tender form that people can fill in to get an offer for their event. These forms come to the company's email and will be answered during few days of a time.

Facebook

Facebook account is updated once or twice a month and they have 2046 page likes, 2000 followers and 424 has marked themselves visited. Com-

pany used to pay money for Facebook advertisement but since it was considered to be insufficient it was discontinued.

Even the company has fair amount of people following their actions in Facebook the interaction and engagement is not high enough. The researcher took 14 example posts and analysed the post likes and shares and came up with the chart below. From the chart it can be noticed that the amount of likes does not reach 50 more than three times. And the same occurred in all 28 posts that the company had during January 2015 and September 2017.



While analysing the Facebook posts it was also noticed that the company had posted content only 28 times during almost three years of a time. This means less than 10 posts during one year of a time. In addition, most of their posts were about promoting their holiday homes in Spain and not that much about their business activities in Hämeenlinna.

E-newsletter

E- newsletters were normally send to all email contacts (376 contacts) four times a year. However, during 2015 and 2017 company has been keeping a bit more lower profile and wanted to see what happens if newsletter is not sent or other marketing ways are not so efficiently used.

E-newsletters were sent and analysed through Mail Chimp which is world's largest marketing automation platform. Newsletters all had the same design and other similarities but content was changing according to time of year and latest updates about company's actions.

Other marketing channels

Compared to newsletters, fairs were more often used marketing channel, in fact, it used to be the biggest marketing cost for the case company X. The company took part in several wedding fairs and some conference fairs during the year. They had an own stand where they were promoting their facilities and services to the potential customers. But company has not been participating on them in the past two years of a time since they have lost their faith in getting the wanted outcomes from the fairs. Meaning that possible customers were interested and even were in contact but still did not book anything which means no income generated.

In addition, company advertises on newspaper occasionally when they have more important news and a need for marketing channel that certainly is worth of using such as Mother's Day lunch which is organized for private people. Since normally mansion is only open from reservation this exceptional day feels worth of making more marketing effort at least the entrepreneur thinks so.

3.3 Future Goals

From the future case company X is looking for more cost-effective ways for marketing. It wishes that the marketing channels could still reach lots of people and companies even it would be less costly. Bringing out the potential of this place is one crucial factor in the business growth for this company. It is sad that many small entrepreneurs quit because of their unprofitable business and only big company chains can manage to keep up with the economics. This is one reason why this company has a cutting edge. It is a completely family business and more personal service can be provided. The owners know this very well but they do not know how to utilize the privilege.

In future the company would wish to put more focus more on B2B customers. The best events to be held are wellbeing events, conferences etcetera. These events do not require as much work and effort as for example weddings. Wedding couples tend to contact the company several times before the actual date to make sure everything will be perfect for the wedding. With business customer communication and booking is much easier. They will tell you at the same time all you need to know and then they show up on the reserved date, keep their conference, eat something and then leave with great gratitude. The wedding couples are approximately 40% of the time unsatisfied for many things happened during their wedding day.

For the owner the personnel that work in the mansion every now and then are hard to get and keep motivated. When the staff comes to work they cannot be described as highly motivated employees. It can be so due to the fact that they perform many part-time jobs at the same time and are overwhelmed by the amount of work. But company cannot really obtain any

other kind of staff since they are open so rarely, especially during winter time.

Another improvement that the owner wants to carry out is to be more involved with whole heart and soul in all actions of the company and to make the place bloom again. Owner admits that the company has collapsed a little bit because of the changes executed in the mansion property and deterioration of customer volume. In addition company has received some constructive feedback from unhappy customers and this is something that needs to be fixed. The owner strongly believes in the mansion and its historical charm. Now what is left to do is to tell possible customers why the case company X is worth of a visit.

3.4 Interview Results

Tuomas Honkajuuri, CEO of the case company X, was interviewed about current situation of the business. Here in below there are presented interview questions with answers.

1. Why company has lost so many customers? What you think are the reasons for reduced customer volumes?

Competition is higher than before and our region no longer has a tourist office which would combine municipal services and market them. Additionally we have not put so much of effort on marketing over the last few years because we have found it to be costly and partly useless. We have also changed our facilities and some services are reduced which can certainly affect the situation.

2. What makes you say that marketing has been useless?

Well, I mean that compering to the money invested in all marketing efforts, mostly fairs and newspaper, is much greater than the outcomes wanted. We have relied on the fact that people can find information about us from Facebook or from our web page.

3. Why do you think that your company is not visible enough?

I've come across local people who do not even know where the mansion is located. So why would anyone in Helsinki or Tampere know our location. We started our business in 2009 and at the start our operations were small without even own restaurant kitchen. Today we have an all-inclusive celebration venue.

4. How about your current marketing presence, what channels are used? How strongly you are involved in social media?

The company's web page we strive to update at least once a month. Our newsletter is usually sent by e-mail four times a year. In addition, Facebook account is updated when there is a need for some bigger piece of information. In the newspaper we only advertise once a year before Mother's Day lunch. At fairs we use to visit a few times a year but since costs on marketing there are very high versus what we will gain with it, we decided to stop it.

5. What are the current challenges for your company? Internal and external.

Internal challenges probably are limited resources, deficiency of motivated personnel and low brand visibility, as well as low marketing efforts are the challenges of this moment in our company.

What comes to my mind from external challenges I could say that our municipality area has no longer a travel agency that would work with the small enterprises of the area. Actually, Hämeenlinna / Kanta-Häme region is not much of co-operation between small enterprises. The area has a lot of similar companies and the worst competitors for us are those that do not have alcohol licenses. This means that these companies allow for the customers to bring their own drinks (usually imported from Estonia). For example, for wedding receptions this means a considerable reduce on total costs.

6. What are strengths or opportunities of your company?

Our manor's location is excellent because we are situated on the lake side of Vanajavesi, yet only 1.5 km from the Helsinki-Tampere motorway. We have always emphasized warm and cosy atmosphere. The mansion strongly exudes history and milieu is one of a kind. It is our trump card. In addition, I strongly believe that our price level is very competitive.

7. Could you specify your target market?

Our clients include private clients, companies, associations and organizations. Most business customers come to keep conferences and private weddings or graduation in our mansion. Our customer base is changing.

8. What are your company goals in the future?

We would like to exploit the potential of the various facilities of the estate. We also would like to bring more public the fact that we are a family business that offers more personal service. We should also invest in procurement of a highly motivated workforce.

In future we would prefer to but more focus on business customers; meetings, wellness days etc. Also, new ideas and vision for menus are needed.

9. Do you think that with right marketing actions your company would be able to gain more customer volume?

Yes, I think it is just matter of finding the most suitable and cost-effective solutions for us in terms of marketing. I admit that, at least in social media we could be more open and active. Probably the reason for it is that we are not so familiar with all the possible networks for us and do not know how to utilize them in a best way.

4 ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION

A current situation analysis is based on ready materials and self-collected material. Primary data for this analysis was collected by experimentation and observation. While secondary data was collected by analysing previously posted data in social media and other marketing channels.

This analysis includes:

- SWOT as an operational analysis
- analysis of currently used social media channels
- competitor analysis and challenges of the restaurant industry
- marketing development in case company
- future analysis

4.1 SWOT

SWOT – analysis was created to gather up and analyse the case company's strategic factors (internal and external). The researcher decided to use 8- cell SWOT, also called SWOT or TOWS matrix, to construct four helpful strategies; SO, WO, ST and WT. In the beginning of the development process SWOT is a good tool for audit and analysis but later on when there is a need for strategy comparison and selection TOWS is the right tool for it. And taking into account the nature of this research TOWS is a suitable analysis model because it is acknowledged to be practical particularly in the field of marketing. (Mulder, 2017.)

<div>INTERNAL</div> <div>EXTERNAL</div>	Strenghts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • small, privately owned family company • exellent location • competitive prices • historical milieu • personal service • motivated owners 	Weaknesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limited resources • low visibility/ awareness among target market • weak marketing presence • lack of expertise in workforce
Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased popularity in appreciating old goods and buildings • increased use of social media • improvements in people's financial situations • company's holiday apartments in Spain and Mini Spa 	S+O <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • location and historical aspects could be utilized in more innovative ways • differentiating from competitors with quality of the service, customized solutions • social media posts that highlight strengths and assets that the company has 	W+O <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • utilizing social media for gaining more visibility with limited resources • marketing presence improvements with facilities that have not been advertised yet too much • appeal to customer simply with the history of the mansion
Threats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high competition, new entrants • lack of support from local area towards all the entrepreneurs in the same business field • changes in service portfolio can effect on customer segments 	S+T <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strengths should be highlighted more in order to stay competitive • since there are no more supporting or connecting organizations in local area it does not mean the end of co-operation between entities • with the motivation owners are able to manage the changes 	W+T <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • company has a good potential for improving their services which means they are competitive and they just need to find ways to market themselves in order to gain more visibility and customers

Strengths

The biggest strength of the company is their welcoming atmosphere. All their business values and statements are based on the fact that they are a small family business. For customers this means a more personal and customized services. Moreover, the mansion's location is excellent since its only one and half kilometres from Helsinki-Tampere high way and they are yet in their own peaceful setting beside the lake. The milieu of the mansion is historical; all the window frames, plank floors, wall papers and other details are hundreds of year old and full of beauty brought by time. And it can be said that the history appeals certainly to everyone entering the mansion's halls.

In addition, company strongly believes that their prices are competitive compared to their competitors. It was also stated that they can bring added value to their services by their highly personalized solutions. For example in case of a wedding people can influence menus, seating layout, program, decorations and timetable. The company only gives guidelines and assistance in all the matters but in the end it is the customer that defines how the event arrangements will proceed. The price will be based on what customers choose to include into their event or celebration.

Weaknesses

For a small privately owned company the resources are limited. There is not much of extra money to put into larger investments. Also one weakness seems to be a lack of expertise in work force. Nowadays it is hard to find both professional and motivated employees at least in restaurant business. And extra challenges is bringing the fact that the case company X is only open from reservation so the staff is not permanent and there is work available only time to times.

The enterprise has a low visibility which means that there are many people, even local people, who do not know the company location or the services provided within the business. This can be related to the fact that company's marketing presence is not high and there could be improvements made. Case company's marketing channels are different fairs where they go to promote, then their web page and Facebook page. They also try to send newsletter twice a year for their email connections. If there is a public event held they will put an advertisement on newspaper, like they do for example Mother's Day lunch.

Opportunities

One of the biggest opportunities for the case company is the increasing popularity in old goods and buildings. Today's people have come to appreciate again the old fashion and design trends. They have started to search old and historical items from second hand stores and from old houses that they used to grow up rather than buying new things over and over again. The researcher believes that it has become a lifestyle that tries to rebel against the materialism world that we currently live in. Anyway,

the trend is now ascending and people are looking event venues that have historical appealing and that is something that should be brought up in the marketing actions of the company.

Another opportunity is the social media. Since the company wishes to advertise their services cost-effectively but still raise the long lost brand awareness this is a good opportunity to make miracles happen with the social media. Social media is effective and wise tool to use but it requires, at least in the beginning, more effort in content creation and discover of the right channels and networks.

Even the economic situation seems bad and some concerns are overshadowing the future there are many potential opportunities available for the case company X. End of year 2015 the company sold their festival pavilion and turned many halls into private space leaving only one big hall for events and public use. Even these changes have been made there are several other areas of the property that could be used for competitive business activities. One of the most potential one is the mini spa. Spa facilities include a large sauna, Jacuzzi, lounge area, wide swimming pool (12mx6m), outdoor hot tub and terrace area to the lake. With right marketing actions this facility has a great potential to attract new customers.

In addition, rental homes in Spain are now marketed in their own rental sites but they should also be integrated better into the marketing of the mansion since they have enormous potential to attract customer to visit on company's web page, and who knows what else they find interesting from there.

Threats

There is a high competition within the region since there are many similar enterprises offering same kind of services. Many historical mansions or buildings are turned into event venues. And since the overall poor economic situation the amount of customers in the market has decreased. And when there are less customers and the race of attracting them to choose your business has become impossible.

Like mentioned before Finnish restaurant businesses are now wading in a mud in many ways. In case company X the CEO has also recognized the factors that have effected on their declining amount of customers and sales. In Häme area there are several places for rent which don't have an alcohol licence meaning that they are able to rent out their facilities for people who want to bring their own drinks. People who rent those facilities have more likely purchased their alcohols and other beverages from Estonia where they get them cheaper. For places like case company X this means less target customers like wedding couples and birthday people. And what feels unfair is that companies who do not have any alcohol licences they also don't have any extra work or costs due to that. But companies that have gotten their licenses they have to have certain inventories, annual inspections, workforce with certificates and money to pay the relevant fees. This means that companies who need the license also need to have more resources to invest than companies without the license. These

companies end up paying more and still having fewer customers because their alcohol prices are too high so that purchasing from Estonia just comes much cheaper. (Interview, Honkajuuri 2016.)

Another worry of the CEO according to interview is lack of support and mutual actions from the area. There used to be an association which purpose was to promote the local tourism and restaurant businesses and work together with them in order to gain more customers to the Häme area. This organization was called Hämeen Matkailu Oy and it was concluded in the end of 2014. Other cities like Turku and Lahti are familiar stands at fairs since they promote themselves a lot and they have lot of visitors and customers for restaurants and hotels. The situation in Hämeenlinna has never been worse. (Interview, Honkajuuri 2016.)

4.2 TOWS Strategies

SO – strategy

We all know that a location, location and once again the location is always a huge plus when it comes to thinking of ones assets. The great demographic location, welcoming atmosphere and highly customized solutions are the key aspects that add value to the services of the case company. The SO-strategy should use those strengths in order to benefit from opportunities. Here are couple of examples of what SO-strategy for the case company could look like:

1. Relevant content to win over more customers.
 - Published content should utilize in more innovative way the great aspects of the company. Motivating customers to take action is the key.
2. Outshine the competition by added value, trust and convenience.
 - Since the company has motivated owners and plenty of opportunities they should claim the piece of the market that belongs to them and that takes belief as well as trust.

WO – strategy

By using opportunities to improve the weaknesses is part of the process of identifying key issues in the company. And since there are lots of opportunities there are also lots of external factors that can fix the internal issues. WO-strategy examples for the case company:

1. Organize an open-door day
 - People's financial situations have improved and they do like again to take place in local events and spend money to have experiences. Organizing an event that is open for everyone would be a great opportunity to spread awareness and show what the mansion has to offer.

2. Wise use of social media in order to gain more visibility
 - Resources being limited in the small company it is crucial to make the social media marketing to a count. Make the company involved and there is a chance to not only attract customer but also professional work force which was one of the lacking issues.
3. Include new aspects to the marketing
 - Company has some facilities that have not been advertised at all and are not in the awareness of the customers. Company's current marketing presence is weak and with all the new content it could be improved unless even expanded.

ST – strategy

Overcoming and even avoiding external threats is only possible by exploiting company strengths.

1. Highlight key strengths to clarify why you are different
 - Make sure customers choose you over the competitor by highlighting company's strengths in business actions as well as in marketing actions. It is reasonable to put more focus on few of the strengths when constructing content or creating marketing campaigns.
2. Co-operation with other local entity
 - Because there are no more supporting or connecting organizations in local area that would bring the entrepreneur together and include them in the marketing of the area it does not mean the end of co-operation. Case company should take matters into own hands and find suitable co-operation targets in order to benefit together and achieve more powerful force to attract people to come to Hämeenlinna and exercise local services.
3. Manage the changes professionally
 - Managing the internal and external changes owners need to use their motivation and adaptability. Not to fall behind is important because it can harm the business.

WT – strategy

Last but not the least is WT-strategy which is attempting to minimise weaknesses in order to avoid possible threats. If the case company would take an advice from the other strategies introduced it would have a good chance to overcome weaknesses and reduce the amount of threats.

1. Trust the potential and believe in development
 - The potential is there; opportunities are offering good possibilities to make us of strengths and overpower weaknesses as well as outdo the threats.

4.3 Challenges in Restaurant Industry in Finland

According to Matkailu – ja Ravintolapalvelut MaRa Ry economic situation in Finland has not shown any improvements during past years which has led restaurant and tourism businesses into weak sales figures. Simply households have less extra money to spend and also unemployment in Finland has increased. This has lead Finnish companies within the restaurant industry feel that insufficient demand is evidently the biggest barrier for business growth. The expectations of the changes in the industry are very cautious even there might be slight chance to see some growing sales figures during the spring 2016. (Mara Ry:n Suhdannebarometri, 2016.)

One of the major factors that have negatively influenced the restaurant businesses in Finland is the alcohol imports from Estonia. Fetching the alcohol from Estonia has already become a common and traditional habit for Finnish people. According to Tutkimus- ja Analysointikeskus TAK Oy's authorized research Finnish people brought 56 million litres of alcohol from Estonia during year 2015. Over 45% of those purchases were major ones containing over 100 litres. The research included 3757 interviewed Finnish travellers. (Tak Oy's releases, 2016.) This most likely means that those purchases were bought to be use in bigger occasions like in weddings or birthday parties et cetera. Since there are event venues where it is possible to bring own beverages and food supplies people are more likely choose those places over a place like the case company to save in the amount of total costs.

The situation is not fair in many ways. Place like the case company needs to have an expensive alcohol license, do inventories, have detailed action plan and make sure all the employees have passed the alcohol license training. Then there are certain limitations regarding opening hours and for whom you can serve and not. As well as, if there is own kitchen and catering there are tons of licences and limitations that come in hand and hand. Whereas, the places that does not have alcohol or other licences they have less worries and costs in that matter. Then they are able to rent their facilities for occasions where own alcohol and food is allowed. People can eat and drink as much as they want and as long as they want, there is no one to tell that minors are not allowed to drink or that the party should end till mid night. As strange that is sounds that is how it goes.

4.4 Competitive Analysis

For knowing where the case company stands in relation to most important competitors is by conducting a competitive analysis the only way to be up to date. To be ahead of the game gives lots of advantage in the business field. Consequently, there are several questions that should be answered in order to profile possible competitors with utilizing the secondary data.

- Who are the top three competitors?
- What is the range of products and services that they offer?

- Are their products and services targeted exactly the same market?
- Are competitors profitable?
- How many years have they existed in the same business field?
- How can your business distinguished from competitors?
- Do they have competitive advantage and what it is?
- Do they operate in same geographic area?
- In which of the marketing channels they appear?

Top three competitors are very similar places than the case company offering event and conference services. The places are also mansions or other old buildings and two of them are located in Hämeenlinna and one in neighbour municipality Hattula. The products and services of the competitors are targeted for the same market but all of the places have some uniqueness in them.

As far as the secondary sources were able to point out that the competitors' businesses are profitable and they all have business activities whole year around. They all have existed around same amount of time as the case company in the field of restaurant and hospitality business.

All of the competitors have good and active presence in Facebook and Instagram. Their web pages are up to date, full of reasonable information and visually attracting.

4.5 Marketing Development in Case Company X

As competitive analysis indicates the competition is inevitable and can be considered as high since already in Hämeenlinna area there are very much of it not to mention competitors in neighbour municipalities. When studying the matter it was noticed that the case company falls short between all the competitors and their more active marketing actions.

Even the company has in purpose left their marketing activities for less attention when being scared that it is not as effective as it should be compared to the amount of money that is used for it. However, sparseness of marketing is not the answer which was also noticed by the CEO when asking help in finding the suitable for ways for their company to promote their business efficiently and cost-effectively.

Maybe then it is time for new marketing segments for already existing services to bring out the competitive advantages more forth. The most reasonable way to develop marketing actions of the case company is to put more focus on content that is published and viewed by potential customers. With right content the case company will be able to raise more awareness and get the attention pulled towards them.

4.6 Embracing New Way of Thinking

After conducting an interview and observing the action of the company it can be said that they are very set in their ways of handling things. And those old ways of thinking and acting does not involve too deep of an understanding about use of content or social media. Social media is a personal platform and should be used to create personal relationships that will help your business to gain more visibility and grow customer volume. Being soulless in social media can bring even more harm than benefit. Same goes with content; it is your personal message to the crowd. What they should hear is your voice not some else's voice.

Providing knowledge instead of just small-talking about your services is exactly what content marketing is teaching for us. To use content marketing and social media like a pro it is first critical to allow the new way of thinking into the entrepreneur's bottled-up mind. And by new way of thinking researcher means that the content and data shared in social media should not be about one-way messages. For engaging customers it is all about communication and interaction; showing that your company cares and wants to mean more for the sake of customers. The company should see the new way of thinking as a continuous process in social media that would involve:

- ✓ building audience
- ✓ interacting
- ✓ evoking attention
- ✓ having patience
- ✓ enabling natural growth
- ✓ seeing opportunity instead of seeing failure

As it is quoted in many places that everything is not always about the destination, because many times, it is all about the journey. Whether your destination is Facebook, Instagram or some other network; being present in there is simply not enough. The most important stage of growth in social media is the journey. Engaging audience and building trust does not come over one night and also should not be expected to do so. It takes time and most importantly patience.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

The outcomes of the research were analyzed and recommendations are made based on the findings. The recommendations will follow the outflow of this research and will suggest the best practices for the case company X in order them to increase their visibility and boost their customer volume.

What was noticed during the examination of company X's current situation was the lack of believe in future and that they could ever be as successful as they were before. The owner said that they are motivated but do they still believe that better days are coming - not really. The company is

thinking that decreasing amount of customers is because there is too much of competition and they partly might be right but the customers will come to their company to use their services if they put more effort on attracting and engaging them. There has always been competition and there will be; it just gets higher and tougher each year. So this is no time to give up, it is rather a time for re-evaluating company's marketing strategies.

As research introduced two marketing approaches; content marketing and social media marketing, it also came to the conclusion that when integrating both in the company's online marketing strategy the success will almost be guaranteed. When content marketing is all about creation, the social media marketing enhances promotion. Consequently, valuable content needs thought and planning behind before released into social media. When the content is created and shaped in the form wanted the social media steps into the figures. Promoting produced content needs at least as much thought and effort behind as creating it. The social media world is a huge dimension that needs to be fully understood before becoming a master of online marketing.

When talking about small enterprise like the case company X, time and money are always the issues. It is understandable that the resources are limited and one or two persons are not able to handle everything. Or that is what the owners think. However, one of the owners has degree in Information Technology and with right and effective marketing plan it is possible to point more focus on marketing actions. Therefore, it is suggested that case company X should rethink their overall marketing strategy and incorporate social media better in their marketing actions for a better visibility and customer attraction. Before jumping right into middle of social media jungle it is highly recommended to have a convenient content marketing strategy that for example follows the steps (by Odden Lee) introduced in earlier stage of the research. The steps include objectives, audience, content plan, promotion, engagement, measurement.

This research has studied content marketing theory more closely because it would be the best marketing orientation for the case company X to follow. As it is noticed throughout the research that importance and meaning of content has become more valuable in the world that is today, when producing, publishing and keeping up successful content has become harder. For businesses being able to highlight their expertise and catch attention, content must be correct. Since content marketing is all about awareness; making customers aware of brand's services and products rather than giving a high-grade sales speech. It is also about building a relationship with your customer. When thinking about the case company X and their target market; B-2-B customers that come for meetings and conferences are very likely to utilize same service over and over again so with them relationship is all in all. And meaning of relationship comes important when dealing with private people that normally come that one time for example to celebrate their wedding. A wedding day is one of the most important and meaningful days of people's lives and you should decide who could you trust to arrange the venue and food so that everything would not be opposite of what you have wished for when the day finally comes. Would the

wedding couples then choose a place that they barely know existing over the one they have followed in social media and have knowledge of what all they can offer. To think from this perspective; if the business would be able to build a bridge of trust in beforehand, it then would already have a solid base for a customer relationship when they contact the venue. And after that those customers are surely more likely to choose this company for celebrating their most important day.

To Start a Corporate Blog

The current situation analysis also revealed that the case company has lots of potential within their business. Company's strengths and opportunities should be put in better use and brought out to customers' attention and to overcome the threats and weaknesses. The biggest trumps are the case company's locations, milieu and warm atmosphere that shine through the customer service that is provided. Based on these findings researcher suggests that starting a corporate blog for marketing purposes would be a good way for letting people know more about these strengths and all in all today's life in a mansion. Now when looking at the web page and rarely updated Facebook page of the case company X it can be noticed that there is not much of content or information that would give a clear picture of the characteristics of this place and its services. The blog would have a real chance to attract people to come to the mansion and see with their own eyes all what is introduced in the blog. It definitely would be a good and more personal way for customers to see that the case company is committed for what they are doing, by putting their heart and soul in.

For example the blog could tell what one day of an entrepreneur of the case company holds in itself. People are interested what kind of secrets the old mansion has inside and what kind of life people are living there now in 2017. In the blog there also should be added connecting links to other social media channels. Making so leads is part of content marketing, as learned before, leads function as sources of incomes or potential customers when used correctly. Leading customers from your blog to your web page or other network is wise and worthwhile. LLTA – model introduced earlier in this research could be utilized for making the right kind of leads and creating the right kind of relationships.

Facebook Presence

The recommendation concerning the Facebook page is that the case company X is to be more active on this particular network. Company's Facebook page is currently very bland and it needs more content and more identity. But why Facebook is so crucial for the businesses? Well, customers today want to find information needed fast and easily. If they cannot find the information quickly they rather go somewhere else. For finding business location, opening times and other important information, Facebook offer the best settings and that opportunity should definitely be utilized. In addition through this research it was notice how many benefits Facebook and social media can offer, so there is no time to waste but to take action in to own hands.

Company's website

It is recommended to update company's webpage more often and with more strategical mind setting. This means that the web page should not be updated just because it is a time for it but because there is something important information that should be brought in to a day light. Website is like a home base in baseball, when customers come there you already have made them more aware and scored one for the team.

As company wishes to have cost-effective ways to market their business; web site definitely is low-cost advertising, it is also convenient and accessible around the clock. Potential customers can visit the page 24 hours a day and it works as an always-available resource for information. With professional looking web site the benefits gained are much greater than when it is not so thoughtfully or visually putted together.

Instagram

Because company has such a big amount of other services just than the restaurant business itself; a mini spa, holiday apartment in Spain et cetera, it would be recommended to create Instagram account. Instagram could bring out aspects of the mansion and the services that people have no idea. Instagram has so much to offer in what comes to promoting a brand. It is a very marketer friendly platform, telling a story with less of words is possible through visual content and additionally it is much more fun than many other networks. Furthermore, case company wishes in future to gain more B2B-customers (companies, organizations, associations) so networking is the key. In Instagram there are almost all of the local companies and they are highly committed publishing content and getting other companies' attention. Other local companies are already sticking their names in to peoples' minds so now would be a good time to one of those companies.

Calendar for contents and social media

As earlier in this research it was stated that before becoming an expert in social media or succeed to achieve established social media marketing goals there should be a convenient strategy plan. The author suggests that the best way to keep up with the content and data that was shared, is shared or will be shared is to have a calendar or other kind of a playbook. There are several benefits of having a content calendar:

- Gives a bigger picture
- Time-efficiency: more time left for brainstorming ideas and thinking visual aspects when everything is scheduled
- Reminds about holidays as good promotion days
- Reduces stress when planed ahead
- Consistency

Having the content marketing calendar makes publishing content and keeping up with social media platforms and trends more effortless and fun. A straightforward plan in black and white will reduce stress and blackouts

when it is time to create a newsletter or publish a blog post. There are plenty of free calendar templates that can be found online or the option to make an own one that suits best for case company's needs. The calendar can be and should be considered as a part of a content marketing strategy.

6 CONCLUSION

Content marketing still is quite unknown way to market business, at least in Finland, but it is also a growing orientation. The biggest reason for minor content marketing utilization is that the advantages of the marketing trend are not too familiar for many. Like for the case company X it is much easier to stick in the old ways of marketing rather than to start from fresh and acquire all the resources needed. However, there is no one and only way to produce content and best way to do it is by practicing and planning in advance what you want to say. Producing compelling quality content needs lots of effort and thought behind the words. Catching messages are not written just because, but to arise audience's attention. And that is what has gone wrong with the case company. They have considered that it would be enough just if they were showing some kind of social media presence rather than actually thinking of why they are doing it and for whom they are doing it for. As it was recommended to build up a proper marketing strategy for online purposes, the case company X should take action towards better marketing efforts.

During the research it was noticed that marketing in social media is a big part of content marketing orientation and since nowadays most of the customers are reached through Internet, content marketing can be something useful for many businesses around the world. Nonetheless it is good to keep in mind that content marketing does exist also outside the online world. From content marketing it is a smooth movement towards social media marketing; which is not a same thing but overlapping in some parts of the principles. When the base, in other words content, is structured the next step is to publish it in social media. And in order to know in which social media channel the content would be most reasonable to publish, social media marketing strategy is needed. Only after, marketing in social media can be initiated.

What comes to the limitations of this study is that the primary data used came only from the company owners' own experiences reflecting only one perspective. To get fuller point of view some old customers could have asked to give feedback and share their experiences. But the struggle was that the company does not have a solid customer base since the customers are all the time changing; well, you turn 50 only once in a life time and normally getting married is counted as once in a life time thing too. So it would have been hard to reach the old customers and they could have provided feedback based on only one time experience. To support research-

er's decision to use only limited amount of primary data plenty of secondary data was studied and introduced.

For the researcher this study taught to smartly manage time and work more productively so that after the recommendations the case company would have a proper and factual action plan that could be utilized within their future marketing actions. Also finding and utilizing different sources was instructive experience. Combining theory into practice needed lot of deeper thinking and straight-forward plan in order to be congruent. After all, the whole process was rewarding and all the knowledge achieved will definitely be useful in future.

To conclude it all the case company has a really good and competitive situation going on and the good drive of the owners is going to be their key for managing even through hard times. It is for sure that the company has been a bit lost with their marketing activities and even gave up with them because they were seen only costly and time-consuming but not useful let alone profitable. However, the research was able to solve the problem and successfully introduced recommendations that would give a good guidance and help for the company's future marketing actions. Overall, researcher feels that the problem was real and research was conducted productively.

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PERSONAL INTERVIEW WITH CEO

1. Why company has lost so many customers? What you think are the reasons for reduced customer volumes?
2. What makes you say that marketing has been useless?
3. Why do you say that your company is not visible enough?
4. How about your current marketing presence, what channels are used? How strongly you are involved in social media?
5. What are the current challenges for your company? Internal and external.
6. What are strengths or opportunities of your company?
7. Could you specify your target market?
8. What are your company goals in the future?
9. Do you think that with right marketing actions your company would be able to gain more customer volume?